



# First Mennonite Church

## Midweek E-Newsletter

December 14, 2022

### From the Pastor

#### Stuck in a Snowstorm

This past Monday my brother John began driving from Windsor, Ontario to Golden, Colorado, where he was going to spend a week with his girlfriend Bonnie before coming to spend Christmas with us. As usual, he was a road warrior and made it all the way on I-80 to central Nebraska (about 900 miles in 13 hours) before stopping for the night. Tuesday morning was relatively mild, and he confidently set out for the remaining five hours, give or take. Before long his GPS wanted him to get off of I-80 and head south and west. Okay. But then after a while his GPS wanted him to return north to I-80! Which, although a bit confused, he did. But then when he got to North Platte Nebraska, he and all the other westbound traffic was routed off I-80 again. A police officer along the exit ramp told him that I-80 was closed. There was a blizzard! He drove north five miles to US 30, which he hoped would be open, and that the conditions wouldn't be so bad. But sure enough, within miles the temperature dropped and frozen precipitation began to fall, and then to accumulate, as the wind created white-out conditions. When he started slipping and sliding he realized that this was serious. He was able to go another 38 miles to Ogallala, NE, a small town of 5000 where he found a "mom and pop" motel and resignedly hunkered down. But not before getting stuck in a snowdrift, which two kind strangers pushed him out of.

When was the last time you were stuck in a snowstorm? Ideally, we're safe in our own homes when a winter storm hits. But in a heavy travel season such as this, it's not at all uncommon for holiday drivers to have to pull off the highway and hunker down. (Especially in western Kansas or Nebraska, and in eastern and northern Colorado!)

Let's face it. Life brings its share of "winter storms" and white-out blizzards. Times when we can't see where we're going and aren't sure whether to stay on the familiar route or try an alternate path. And sometimes, we get stuck. Or find the road closed. At such times, we'll be lucky to find a motel or other wayside haven in which to wait out the storm. Are you in the midst of such a winter storm right now? Are we, as a church? When I was talking to him on Tuesday afternoon, he said that he was very disappointed about the loss of precious time he and Bonnie would have together. But, he was glad to be safe, and warm. And he also admitted that disappointment aside, it was kind of like an adventure!

(Wednesday a.m. update. My brother just texted. I-80 is still closed. Sometimes you just have to wait. In the meantime, he's enjoying a breakfast of eggs, bacon, and black coffee!

*Tom*

## **Verse of the Week:**

**Isaiah 60:2**

*“For darkness shall cover the earth and thick darkness the peoples,  
But the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you.”*

## **Among Our Friends and In Our Prayers**

- ☞ Pray for brothers and sisters through our directory.
- ☞ Pray for **all those who are grieving** the loss and absence of loved ones in this season of the year.
- ☞ Remember the **families at Main Street Ministries** who will receive our gifts from our youth group. Pray they will draw near to God and find Him faithful.
- ☞ **WDC Request:** In this Advent season, give thanks for God's gifts of creativity and joy celebrated in the diverse cultural and ethnic traditions of congregations across WDC. (and among our own diverse members!)

## **Upcoming Events**

- ☞ **Jesus brings joy!** It's the third week of Advent. Our sheets are green this week and still available on the table in the foyer if you didn't get one.
- ☞ **IMPORTANT NOTICE:** Congregational Meeting this coming Sunday. We will immediately transition into a congregational meeting after our worship service. Please plan to stay for this brief time. We will discuss and decide on our opportunity to run the summer Food4Kids program out of our building which has currently run out of the Trinity Church building and is needing to relocate. This will involve primarily the kitchen area plus some storage of supplies. A second item has also now been added to the agenda to share and discuss.

- ☞ **Special Invitation!** The Sunday School class will be hosting a 4:00 pm “faspa” on Sunday, January 8th at Mark and Sandy Hiebert’s home. “Faspa” is a Low German word which meant a light lunch about 4 pm on workdays. It also meant the gathering of family and friends, usually at 4 pm Sunday, for a light meal and fellowship, with an emphasis on fellowship. The meal always included zwieback, coffee and might also include cheese, cold cuts, and jelly. It was taken for granted that when you go visiting on Sunday afternoon, invited or not, that you will be served “faspa” by your hostess.’ So, consider dropping in! We will also watch the special Christmas episode of “The Chosen” video series at this event as we will be in the time of “epiphany”. (<https://www.goesselmuseum.com/what-is-faspa->)



## Other Announcements

- ☞ **Thanks** again to all who so generously gave to Main Street Ministries at our youth lunch. We have given each family unit a 6” potted Norfolk Island Pine as a Christmas tree and will give the rest out as Chamber Bucks for Mom’s to spend as most needed.



### ☞ **January 11 to May 8 - Missional Leadership Class**

The “M” word - you’ve heard it, you’re intrigued, but what does it really mean? Join Michele Hershberger to learn what “missional” means and how a proper understanding of this concept can transform your congregation. As part of the class you will see the Bible through a missional lens and learn great tips for starting your church on a journey of spiritual renewal and growth. You can join the class in person on Hesston’s campus or online via Zoom on Monday evenings starting January 16 through May 8, 6:30 to 8:45 p.m. CST. Contact Michele Hershberger at [michele.hershberger@hesston.edu](mailto:michele.hershberger@hesston.edu) for more information. Register online by January 9, 2023.

- ☞ **MCC Christmas Giving!** Give gifts of comfort and joy and help meet the basic needs of our global neighbors this Christmas. Choose from unique gifts such as goats, bees, backpacks and more. Give at [mcc.org/delight](http://mcc.org/delight), call 888.563.4676.